

# EBSA News

---



U.S. Department of Labor  
Employee Benefits Security Administration  
Washington, D.C.  
USDL 03-26

For Immediate Release  
Sept. 17, 2003  
Contact: Gloria Della  
(202) 693-8664

## **Labor Department Announces Proposed Effective Date Of COBRA Regulations Will Be Delayed**

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) today assured the employee benefits community that the department will provide adequate time for group health plans to comply with final rules on the notice requirements of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA).

In response to questions about complying with the department's proposed COBRA notice rules, Assistant Secretary of EBSA Ann L. Combs said, "The department intends to give group health plans six months after adoption of final rules to implement administrative changes required by the new rules. Allowing sufficient time for orderly and efficient implementation of the new requirements will help ensure compliance."

The final rules are expected to be issued early next year, according to Combs. "In the interim, plan administrators may use the model notices contained in the proposed regulation to satisfy their COBRA notice obligations, although they are not required to do so," said Combs.

The new COBRA notice requirements were proposed in the *Federal Register* on May 28, 2003. The model notices are available on EBSA's web site at [www.dol.gov/ebsa](http://www.dol.gov/ebsa).

###

---

U.S. Labor Department releases are accessible on the Internet at [www.dol.gov/ebsa](http://www.dol.gov/ebsa). The information in this news release will be made available in alternate format upon request (large print, Braille, audio tape or disc) from the COAST office. Please specify which news release when placing your request. Call (202) 693-7773 or TTY (202) 693-3911.